

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 304318
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TO AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 304318

NODIS
FOR AMBASSADOR LOW

FOLLOWING REPEAT GENEVA 09707 ACTION SECSTATE DTD 06 DEC

QTE

S E C R E T GENEVA 9707

NODIS

FOR SCHAUFELE FROM WISNER

DEPT PASS LONDON FOR SEITZ

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PFOR RH UK
SUBJ: DEADLOCK IN NAMIBIA

1. MARK CHONA CALLED ME THIS MORNING IN LONDON TO SAY
THAT HE HAD AN URGENT MESSAGE TO DELIVER. SHORTLY AFTER
MY RETURN TO GENEVA, CHONA CAME TO THE MISSION.

2. CHONA REPORTED THAT HE HAD BEEN ON THE TELEPHONE
WITH PRESIDENT KAUNDA AND, AMONG OTHER SUBJECTS, THEY
DISCUSSED THE SITUATION IN NAMIBIA. CHONA WAS IN A GLOOMY
STATE AS HE RECOUNTED KAUNDA'S MESSAGE. KAUNDA TOLD
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 304318

HIM THAT SAM NUJOMA IS EFFECTIVELY IN LUANDA EVEN THOUGH

HE MAKES TRIPS FROM TIME TO TIME TO OTHER AFRICAN CAPITALS INCLUDING LAGOS. NUJOMA HAS BEEN IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH THE SOVIETS AND THE CUBANS AND IS "A CAPTIVE OF THE PROGRAM THEY HAVE FOR HIM." NEITHER THE SOVIETS NOR NUJOMA CARE ABOUT INDEPENDENCE COMING TO NAMIBIA ON DEC 31, 1978. THE QUESTION, CHONA SAID, IS "NOT WHEN INDEPENDENCE COMES, BUT HOW IT COMES." IN EFFECT, NUJOMA HAS MADE HIS MIND UP THAT SOUTH AFRICAN CAN BE DRIVEN OUT OF NAMIBIA AND SINCE HE IS PERSUADED THAT THIS IS THE CASE, HE IS NOW INTERESTED IN HOW HE AND SWAPO CAN IMPOSE THEIR DISCIPLINE ON THE DIVIDED PEOPLES OF NAMIBIA. SECOND, NUJOMA IS THINKING ABOUT HOW HE CAN CONFRONT THE SOUTH AFRICANS AND FORCE THEM TO GIVE UP WALVIS BAY. THIRD, NUJOMA HAS DECIDED HE WILL HAVE TO FACE THE SOUTH AFRICANS ON THE SOUTHERN BORDER. SOVIET ARMS AND CUBAN TROOPS MAY BE NECESSARY FOR ALL THREE PURPOSES.

3. ACCORDING TO CHONA, KAUNDA FEELS THAT THE SOVIETS HAVE BEEN REFINING THEIR PLANNING FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA. THEY BELIEVE THAT GENEVA IS DOOMED AND CAN ONCE AGAIN LOOK TO DEVELOPING A TRANSCONTINENTAL BLOCK, WHICH WILL INCLUDE ANGOLA AND NAMIBIA, MOZAMBIQUE AND ZIMBABWE. CHONA WAS GLOOMY ABOUT ZAMBIA'S FUTURE WHEN FACED WITH THESE PRESSURES. IF THE WAR GOES ON IN ZIMBABWE AND SMITH BEGHDRI
IY PDINTO ZAMBIA, THE ZAMBIANS WILL HAVE TO CALL FOR ARMS. THEY KNOW THEY CAN GET NO HELP FROM THE US OR GREAT BRITAIN AND WILL HAVE

TO TURN TO THE SOVIETS. UNDER NO CONDITIONS CAN KAUNDA MOEPHATE HIS SUPPORT TO THE NATIONALISTS AS THEY BEGIN TO CARRY THE STRUGGLE FROM ZAMBIA INTO RHODESIA.

4. THE SOVIETS ARE MOVING NOW, SAID CHONA. HIS GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN INFORMED THAT A VERY HIGH RANKING SOVIET OFFICIAL WILL VISIT EAST AND WEST AFRICA IN JANUARY. CHONA UNDERSTANDS THE VISITOR MAY BE PODGORNY. THE SOVIET'S VISIT MAY BEGIN IN ANGOLA OR WEST AFRICA BUT IT WILL CONTINUE INTO MOZAMBIQUE, TANZANIA AND

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 304318

ZAMBIA. KUANDA WILL HAVE TO RECEIVE HIM. DURING THE SOVIET'S VISIT, CHONA FELT THERE WOULD BE MAJOR ANNOUNCEMENTS OF SOVIET ASSISTANCE. MACHEL, CHONA SAID, IS DELIGHTED BY SOME OF THE RECENT AND MORE SOPHISTICATED FORMS OF SOVIET ARMS WHICH HE HAS RECEIVED AND WANTS MORE. (CHONA CALLED ME AFTER OUR MEETING TO SAY THAT THE VISIT OF THE SOVIET IS "IN THE PLANNING PHASE" AND HE SIMPLY WANTED TO ALERT US TO THE PLAN SO

THAT WE COULD CHECK OUR OWN SOURCES).

5. RETURNING TO NAMIBIA, CHONA DISPAIRED OF ANY
REASONABLE POSSIBILITIES OF CATCHING NUJOMA'S ATTENTION.
THERE ARE EVEN MEMBERS OF HIS CENTRAL COMMITTEE WHO,
"BECAUSE OF THE LONG DELAY" HAVE BEEN CAUGHT UP IN THE
HEROICS OF NUJOMA'S EXERCISE. IT IS CONCEIVABLE THAT
WALDHEIM COULD INVITE NUJOMA TO NEW YORK AND SAY THAT
THE UN IS PREPARED TO CONVENE THE CONFERENCE. IN ORDER
TO GET OVER NJOMA'S POINT THAT SOUTH AFRICA MUST BE
PRESENT, WALDHEIM MIGHT ARGUE THAT SINCE THE UN IS THE
LEGAL AUTHORITY IN NAMIBIA AND SOUTH AFRICA IS ILLEGAL,
THE UN CANNOT INVITE SOUTH AFRICA TO BE PRESENT
IN THE NAMIBIAN CONFERENCE HALL. IT WOULD BE ESSENTIAL
FOR WALDHEIM TO SAY THAT THE CONFERENCE WAS SQUARELY
UNDER UN AUTHORITY IF HIS ARGUMENTS WERE
TO CARRY ANY WEIGHT. IN ANY EVENT, CHONA WAS NOT
OPTIMISTIC THAT NUJOMA WOULD AGREE. A MORE USEFUL
APPROACH, HE FELT, COULD BE UNDERTAKEN ONCE THE
GENEVA CONFERENCE IS OVER AND ON THE CONDITION THAT IT
IS SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED. NYERERE AND KAUNDA WOULD
BE ABLE TO USE THEIR INFLUENCE WITHIN AFRICA AND WITH
NUJOMA AND HIS CENTRAL COMMITTEE DIRECTLY TO
SAY THAT A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT CAN BE SUCCESSFUL.
IF GENEVA FAILS, HOWEVER, THE PRESIDENTS WILL NOT BE
ABLE TO STEER NUJOMA IN A MORE MODERATE DIRECTION. TO
SAVE GENEVA, IT IS ESSENTIAL, HE SAID, THAT THE BRITISH
MAKE A DRAMATIC MOVE NOW, DECLARE THEIR INTENTION TO
REPLACE THE COUNCIL OF STATE WITH A BRITISH PRESENCE AND
SKILLFULLY MANAGE THE CONFERENCE TO A SUCCESSFUL CON-
CLUSION BEFORE DEC 20.

6. CHONA WAS CRITICAL OF RICHARD AND GRENNAN, IN
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 STATE 304318

PARTICULAR, AND FELT THAT THE WAY THAT THEY WERE
CONDUCTING THEMSELVES WAS LEADING THE NATIONALISTS
TO CONCLUDE THEY AND THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WERE NOT
PREPARED TO TAKE A TOUGH DECISION. CHONA HAD BEEN ON
THE PHONE TO MAJOR FIGURES IN THE CONSERVATIVE HIERARCHY
URGING THEM TO PUT PRESSURE ON THE LABOR GOVERNMENT.
HE HAD REMINDED THE CONSERVATIVES OF THE SOVIET THREAT,
CHONA NOTED THAT IF THE CONFERENCE BREAKS UP ON DEC 20
WITHOUT A SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME, THE NATIONALISTS WILL
EITHER NOT RETURN TO GENEVA OR THOSE WHO COME BACK
WILL PRESS IMPOSSIBLE NEW DEMANDS. A BRITISH SUBSTITUTE
FOR THE COUNCIL OF STATE WILL NO LONGER SUCCESSFULLY
CARRY THE DAY. ONCE THE NATIONALISTS REACH LUSAKA, THE
ACTIVE "KGB" SOVIET AMBASSADOR WILL BRING HIS FULL
INFLUENCE TO BEAR. HE WILL REMIND THE NATIONALISTS THAT

IF THEY WAIT A BIT LONGER THEIR FONDEST DREAMS WILL BE
FULFILLED DURING THE VISIT OF THE SENIOR SOVIET OFFICIALS.

7. CHONA REPLAYED HIS WELL-WORN ARGUMENTS ON POWER
SHARING. I ASSURED HIM THAT HIS ARGUMENTS HAD BEEN
FULLY REPORTED TO WASHINGTON AND HE SEEMED RELIEVED.
NEVERTHELESS, HE ARGUED, IF A DECISION DOES NOT COME
WITHIN THE WEEK, GENEVA IS HEADED FOR A DISASTER AND
NAMIBIA WILL GO DOWN AS WELL.

8. EVEN THOUGH CHONA IS MARSHALLING EVERY ARGUMENT TO
WIN OUR SUPPORT FOR HIS VIEW OF POWER SHARING BY CITING
THE SOVIET THREAT, HE CONVINCED ME HE WAS REPORTING
KAUNDA'S VIEWS AND CONCERNS AS WELL. NUJOMA'S
UNWILLINGNESS TO RETURN TO LUSAKA, HIS PROLONGED STAY
IN LUANDA, SWAPO-MPLA COOPERATION IN SOUTHERN ANGOLA
(WHICH CHONA CONFIRMED) LEAD ME TO CONCLUDE THAT HIS
ESTIMATE OF SOVIET INTENTIONS NEEDS TO BE TAKEN
SERIOUSLY. CATTO UNQTE KISSINGER

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